

NUT POLICY

Beechwood Sacred Heart School aims to practise a nut free policy, although we recognise that this cannot be guaranteed. This policy serves to set out measures to reduce the risk to those children and adults who may suffer an anaphylactic reaction if exposed to nuts to which they are sensitive.

Definition

Anaphylaxis is an allergic condition that can be severe and potentially fatal.

Anaphylaxis is your body's immune system reacting badly to a substance or allergen, such as food, which it wrongly perceives as a threat.

The whole body can be affected usually within minutes of contact with an allergen, though sometimes the reaction can happen hours later.

This policy refers to nuts but at present includes sesame seeds, pine kernels, coconut and sunflower seeds.

Symptoms

The symptoms of anaphylaxis usually starts between 3 and 60 minutes after contact with the allergen. Less commonly, they occur a few hours or even days after contact.

An anaphylactic reaction may lead to feeling unwell or dizzy or may cause fainting due to a sudden drop in blood pressure.

Narrowing of the airways can also occur at the same time, with or without the drop in blood pressure. This can cause breathing difficulties and wheezing.

Other symptoms

- Swollen eyes, lips, genitals, hands, feet and other areas.
- Itching
- A strange metallic taste in the mouth.
- Sore, red, itchy eyes.
- Change of heart rate
- A sudden feeling of extreme anxiety or apprehension
- Itchy skin or nettle-rash
- Unconsciousness due to very low blood pressure
- Abdominal cramps, vomiting or diarrhoea, or nausea and fever.

Anaphylaxis varies in severity. Sometimes it causes only mild itchiness and swelling, but in some people it can cause sudden death.

Anaphylaxis can lead to death if breathing becomes severely obstructed or if blood pressure becomes extremely low.

If symptoms start soon after contact with the allergen and rapidly get worse, this indicates that the reaction is more severe.

Staff

The onus falls on all staff to read and follow this policy both in school and when out on trips and outings.

Caution must be taken at certain times of the year such as Christmas and Easter. If staff distribute confectionery, care must be taken to ensure that no nuts are included in the product. Fruit sweets such as Haribo are a better alternative. Particular products that are a cause for concern are Celebrations; Roses; Heroes; Quality Street.

All product packaging must be checked for warnings directed at nut allergy sufferers and if the following or similar are displayed, the product must not be used in school without supervision of staff and supervised hand washing. -Not suitable for nut allergy sufferers - This product contains nuts.

Catering

Brookwood, the school caterers, have a 'no nut' policy.

Parents

We ask parents not to bring in any food or treats unless they have checked the ingredients carefully.

Packaging must be checked for: -

Not suitable for nut allergy
sufferers -This product contains
nuts.

Both these would indicate that the product is not suitable for school consumption.

Homemade cake for sale at school must not contain nuts.

Pupils

All pupils are regularly reminded that this school is a nut free zone and that good hygiene is practised by washing hands before and after eating.

Home Economics

A risk assessment for the use of nuts in cooking is updated annually and all staff using the Home Economics room are aware of all the procedures in place.

Reviewed DHM September 2018, to be reviewed September 2019